

Project Break Away

Brief Program Description

Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of long-term, after-school programs that combine remedial/compensatory education programs, recreational opportunities, nutritional supplementation, along with social and life skills training, and education about alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use and other health issues. Project Break Away provided an after-school and summer educational and recreational alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug prevention program for adolescents who were exclusively on supervised probation through the Monroe Circuit Court. Participation in the project was one of several options the adolescents could choose as part of their probation order.

The specific objectives were developed to respond to the risk factors identified in a community-wide assessment. Objectives included less alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use and intention to use, more peer disapproval of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use, more perceived risk of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use, greater knowledge of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use, greater decision-making skills, more favorable educational performance, more favorable behaviors, fewer re-arrests, and more releases from supervised probation.

Program Strategies

The educational and recreational activities proposed to meet the outlined objectives included (a) After-school and Summer program, (b) Mentoring component, (c) Parent component, (d) Wilderness Challenge component, and (e) Community Service component.

Population Focus

The specific target population is middle school-aged youth between the ages of 12 and 14 years who are on probation, determined to have a history of early involvement with ATOD, at high risk of involvement with ATOD, in need of adult supervision after school hours, and at risk of dropping out of school or who do not attend school.

Suitable Settings

The intervention is suitable for school- and community-based settings.

Required Resources

ATOD Educational Curriculum, "Making Decisions" Curriculum.

Implementation Timeline

The programming was provided for each participant, 3 days per week from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. during the school year and 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. for 8 weeks during the summer.

Outcomes

Major program outcomes included:

- The comparison group indicated a greater increase in cigarette use than both intervention groups (low dosage and high dosage).
- Project Break Away participants who received low dosage reported significantly less heroin/opium use compared to comparison group members and participants who received high dosage.
- Peer group disapproval of hypothetical drug use increased for the intervention group from baseline to follow-up, while the comparison group showed an unfavorable change during this period.

Contact Information

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

Program Developer

Caren Stoll-Hannon, M.S.

Bloomington Parks and Recreation

Post Office Box 848

Bloomington, IN 47402

Phone: (812) 349-3771

Fax: (812) 349-3707

Email: parks@city.bloomington.in.us